

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 04679 150928Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AF-10 ARA-14 EUR-12 NEA-11
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-20 /151 W

-----069668 150942Z /11

R 150644Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3548
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS CANBERRA 4679

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, ILO, AS
SUBJ: ADDITIONAL GOA COMMENT ON ILO

REF: STATE 127537; CANBERRA 4056

1. FOLLOWING IS OFFICIAL GOA STATEMENT ON ILO.

BEGIN TEXT

WHILE THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT UNDERSTOOD THE REASONS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNITED STATES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION IN NOVEMBER 1977, IT CONSIDERED THE UNITED STATES ACTION A MATTER FOR CONSIDERABLE REGRET. WE CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL SEE ITS WAY CLEAR TO REJOIN THE ORGANIZATION AT AN EARLY DATE. WE HAVE NOTED IN THIS RESPECT THE U.S. BELIEF THAT THE ILO HAS CONTRIBUTED TO IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING OF WORKERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND THAT IT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A POWERFUL FORCE FOR PROGRESS IN MANY AREAS.

2. IN CONSIDERING THE AUSTRALIAN APPROACH TO THE 64TH SESSION OF THE ILC, WE HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED BY A DESIRE TO SEE A CONFERENCE WHICH AVOIDS IRRELEVANT POLITICAL DEBATE AND
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CONFRONTATION AS FAR AS POSSIBLE AND WHICH CONCENTRATES ON THOSE ISSUES OF SPECIFIC CONCERN TO THE ILO, WITHIN ITS FIELDS OF COMPETENCE. WE HOPE THAT THE CONFERENCE WILL THUS BE ABLE TO DISCUSS AND DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH THOSE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE ORGANIZATION, RESOLVING THEM IN A MANNER COMPATIBLE WITH THE ILO'S OBJECTIVES AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF TRIPARTISM.

3. AS FAR AS THE REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IS CONCERNED, THE UNITED STATES WILL BE AWARE THAT AUSTRALIA HAS ALWAYS HELD THE OBSERVANCE OF DUE PROCESS TO BE A PREREQUISITE FOR THE CONTINUED VIABILITY OF THE ILO. WE REGARDED THE FAILURE OF ILC 63 TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE'S REPORT AS A DANGEROUS DEPARTURE FROM THE ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES OF THE ORGANIZATION AND ONE WHICH COULD HAVE SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ILO'S FUTURE.

4. LIKE THE UNITED STATES, WE WELCOMED THE ILO'S SPECIAL MISSION TO ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND HOPE THAT THE ORGANIZATION'S MEMBERS WILL ACCEPT THE REPORT OF THE MISSION. WE SHALL ALSO CONTINUE TO STRESS THE FACT THAT CHARGES OR COMPLAINTS BROUGHT AGAINST ANY MEMBER SHOULD BE HANDLED THROUGH THE MACHINERY ESTABLISHED FOR THAT PURPOSE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH DUE PROCESS.

5. ON THE QUESTIONS OF CONFERENCE PROCEDURE AND STRUCTURE, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THAT SOME DEGREE OF CHANGE IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM IS INEVITABLE. AUSTRALIA, IN COMMON WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED MARKET ECONOMY COUNTRIES (IMEC) GROUP IN THE ILO, WILL BE WORKING TO ENSURE THAT THOSE CHANGES WHICH DO OCCUR WILL BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE ORGANIZATION'S OBJECTIVES AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

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OF TRIPARTISM. HOWEVER, SOME DEGREE OF COMPROMISE WITH THE G.77 COUNTRIES WILL BE NECESSARY IF THE ILO IS TO CONTINUE TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY, AND WE WOULD URGE THE UNITED STATES TO ADOPT A FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE, IN ITS ROLE AS AN OBSERVER, TOWARDS THE CONTINUING EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A WORKABLE SOLUTION. WE ALSO HOPE THAT, WHEN A COMPROMISE IS EVENTUALLY REACHED, THE UNITED STATES - IF IT IS STILL OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION AT THAT TIME - WILL BE ABLE TO ACCEPT IT AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN FAVOR OF RENEWED MEMBERSHIP OF THE ILO.

END TEXT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CANBER04679
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780250-0052
Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780657/aaaabwzl.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5fa16088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 127537, 78 CANBERRA 4056
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2343412
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADDITIONAL GOA COMMENT ON ILO
TAGS: ELAB, PORG, AS, ILO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5fa16088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014